

BRECON RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

for the year 1947.

Officials. Medical Officer of Health..T.C.R.George.
M.R.C.S.,L.R.C.P.,D.P.H.

Chief Sanitary Inspector.....W.J.Rees.
Sanitary Inspector's

Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute and Sanitary
Inspector's Examination Joint Board;Meat and Other Foods
Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute;Diploma of the
Royal Institute of Public Health in Hygiene.

Additional Sanitary Inspectors..D.T.Hopkins.

Sanitary Inspector's
Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute and Sanitary Inspector's
Examination of Joint Board. Part of year.

J.D.Miles.
Sanitary Inspector's
Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute and Sanitary
Inspector's Examination Joint Board.

1. BRECON RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Report of the Medical Officer of Health.

1947.

Mr Chairman, Mrs Crichton and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my annual report on the sanitary conditions and the state of the public health in the Brecon Rural District for the year 1947.

The arrangement of the report is in accordance with the directions contained in Circular 17047 (Wales), issued by the Welsh Board of Health.

Section 1. General and Vital Statistics.

Statistical Summary for the year 1947.

Area.....	189,532 acres
Population (Census 1931).....	8302.
Population (Estimated at Midsummer, 1947).....	7065.
Number of inhabited houses.....	2148.

Live Births.	Males	Females.	Total.	Rate per 1000 Pop.
Legitimate	57	62	119	16.8
Illegitimate.	1	6	7	1.0
	<u>58</u>	<u>68</u>	<u>126</u>	<u>17.8</u>

Still Births.	4	3	7	0.90
---------------	---	---	---	------

Deaths from all causes.	41	39	80	11.3
-------------------------	----	----	----	------

Maternal Deaths.....One.

Deaths under one year;

All infants.....7.	Rate per 1000 live births.....55.
--------------------	-----------------------------------

Legitimate infants..7.

Deaths from special causes;

Infectious disease.....Nil.

Tuberculosis of respiratory system.....3.

Other tubercular disease.....1.

Cancer.....11.

Area.

The Rural District ^{of} Breconshire, which has an area of 189,532 acres, is a large district in the County of Breconshire. The district is situated mainly in the northern part of the county and consists of rather more than one third of the total size of the whole county.

The district is agricultural in nature and farming is the predominant occupation of the inhabitants.

There are no large towns in the area and the administrative offices are situated in the Borough of Brecon.

POPULATION. CENSUS 1931.....8302.

1939.	1940.	1941.	1942.	1943.	1944.	1945.	1946.	1947.
-------	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------

6773.	7775.	8238.	7699.	7298.	6980.	7057.	7074.	7065.
-------	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------

Brecon Rural District.

The above figures are the Registrar General's estimated figures for the various years and apply only to the civilian population. It would appear that the population has dropped considerably since the last census was taken.

The number of inhabited houses in the district was 2148 giving an average number of 3.2 persons per house.

BIRTHS.

	<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females.</u>	<u>Total.</u>	<u>Rate.</u>
1940.....	62.....	63.....	125.....	16.8.
1941.....	51.....	50.....	101.....	12.2.
1942.....	71.....	54.....	125.....	16.3.
1943.....	52.....	57.....	109.....	14.9.
1944.....	82.....	60.....	142.....	20.3.
1945.....	53.....	52.....	105.....	14.8.
1946.....	71.....	60.....	131.....	18.4.
1947.....	58.....	68.....	126.....	17.8.
England & Wales 1947.....				20.5.

It will be observed that the birthrate for the year under review was lower than the average for the whole of England and Wales.

DEATHS.

After taking into account the outwardly and inwardly transferable deaths the net number of deaths registered amongst residents in the district is shown in the following table;

	<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females.</u>	<u>Total.</u>	<u>Rate.</u>
1940.....	55.....	51.....	106.....	13.6.
1941.....	45.....	58.....	103.....	12.5.
1942.....	49.....	52.....	101.....	13.2.
1943.....	40.....	49.....	89.....	12.2.
1944.....	56.....	56.....	92.....	13.2.
1945.....	51.....	55.....	106.....	15.0.
1946.....	43.....	42.....	85.....	12.0.
1947.....	41.....	39.....	80.....	11.3.
England & Wales, 1947.....				12.

The deathrate for 1947 was therefore lower than the average for the whole of England and Wales.

STILL BIRTHS.

	<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females.</u>	<u>Total.</u>	<u>Rate.</u>
1940.....	4.....	1.....	5.....	0.6.
1941.....	3.....	3.....	6.....	0.7.
1942.....	6.....	3.....	9.....	1.1.
1943.....	1.....	5.....	6.....	0.8.
1944.....	0.....	2.....	2.....	0.3.
1945.....	0.....	1.....	1.....	0.1.
1946.....	1.....	4.....	5.....	0.71.
1947.....	4.....	3.....	7.....	0.90.
England & Wales, 1947.....				0.50.

The stillbirth rate was higher than the average for the whole of England and Wales.

INFANTILE MORTALITY.

This is the number of deaths occurring in children of under one year of age. The rate is calculated per 1000 live births.

Brecon Rural District.

	<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females.</u>	<u>Total.</u>	<u>Rate.</u>
1940.....	6	5	11	88.
1941.....	6	3	9	89.
1942.....	3	3	6	48.
1943.....	0	1	1	9.
1944.....	2	4	6	42.
1945.....	3	4	7	66.
1946.....	1	1	2	15.
1947.....	3	4	7	55.
England & Wales, 1947.....				41.

The infantile mortality rate was higher than the average for the whole of England and Wales.

Analysis of Causes of Deaths. Males..41 Females..39

<u>Cause.</u>	<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females.</u>
Pulmonary tuberculosis.....	0	3
Other forms tuberculosis.....	0	1
Cancer mouth.....	1	0
Cancer stomach.....	2	0
Cancer Breast.....	0	3
Cancer other sites.....	3	2
Diabetes.....	1	2
Intracranial vascular lesions.....	8	7
Heart Disease.....	13	10
Other circulatory disease.....	1	2
Bronchitis.....	3	0
Pneumonia.....	2	3
Other respiratory diseases.....	1	0
Ulcer stomach.....	1	0
Other digestive diseases.....	1	0
Maternal causes.....	0	1
Prematurity.....	0	1
Birth injuries and congenital malformations.....	1	2
Suicide.....	0	1
Road traffic Accidents.....	1	0
Other violent causes.....	0	1
All other causes.....	2	0

The deaths are classified under the headings given in the new Abridged List of Causes.

ILLEGITIMACY. The number of illegitimate births registered as belonging to residents in the district was 7.

MATERNAL MORTALITY. There was one death during the year which could be attributed to childbirth.

SECTION 2. GENERAL PROVISIONS OF HEALTH SERVICES.

Public Health Officers. There were certain changes in the public health officers of the Council during the year. Mr. D.T. Hopkins left the employment of the Council on February, 18th. Mr. J.D. Miles was appointed as additional Sanitary Inspector on 24th. May and left on the 13th. September. There was no additional Sanitary Inspector for the remainder of the year. Mr. W.J. Rees remained as your Chief Sanitary Inspector throughout the year.

Laboratory Facilities. During the year laboratory facilities were available at Cardiff, Newport, Carmarthen, Swansea, Aberystwyth and Brecon.

Water samples were sent to the Public Analyst at Carmarthen and to the Public Health Laboratory at Cardiff. Whilst any investigation required in the control of infectious disease was performed by the Public Health Laboratory at Cardiff. All the milk sampling was done by the National Milk Testing and Advisory Laboratory at Brecon, with the exception of milk tested for presence of tuberculosis which was done at Cardiff.

Ambulance Facilities. There was no change in the arrangements existing for the conveyance of sick persons in the district. Motor ambulances, maintained by Merthyr Borough, convey patients suffering from infectious disease to Merthyr Isolation Hospital. The St. John's Ambulance Association meets the need of the other patients requiring removal to hospital.

Home Nursing. The arrangements made by various district nursing associations render the services of a trained nurse available for any family in the district on payment of a small contribution. Such provision deserves every encouragement and support.

Treatment Centres and Clinics. Maternity and Child Welfare clinics, administered by the County Council, are held regularly in Brecon and Sennybridge. Ante-natal clinics and facilities for the treatment of minor ailments, dental and eye defects and orthopaedic defects are available at the County Health Offices, Brecon. These are also administered by the County Council. In addition clinics are held by me at the County Health Office, Brecon, in the morning of the 4th. Friday in each month, and in Sennybridge, in the afternoon of the 3rd. Tuesday in each month, for the immunisation of children against diphtheria.

Hospitals. The hospital needs of the residents of the district, for all diseases apart from infectious disease, are provided by the Brecon War Memorial Hospital. A certain number of patients are also treated in the large hospitals situated in Cardiff and Swansea.

The arrangements for the treatment of infectious disease remain the same as in previous years. Merthyr Borough Council treat the patients from the district suffering from infectious disease and these are conveyed to Merthyr in ambulances maintained by Merthyr Borough Council. These arrangements are proving extremely satisfactory.

For the treatment of cases of smallpox arrangements have been made by the County Council with Aberdare for beds at the Fedw Hir Hospital.

Disinfection. In the main the methods used for any disinfection required have been fumigation and spraying. A modern steam disinfecter, with facilities for the conveyance of infected clothing, would be of great use in the district.

SECTION 3. MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.

These services are administered by the County Council and include clinics for maternity and child welfare, dental treatment, orthopaedic treatment, visual defects and expectant mothers. Provision is also made for free and cheap rate milk and medicinal foods. The supervision of midwives, child life protection and the care of premature and illegitimate infants is also the responsibility of the County Council.

SECTION 4. SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES.Water Supply.

Water is derived for domestic and other purposes in the district from 23 Council supplies, private supplies, wells and springs.

There are 37 parishes in the district and, speaking generally, it is safe to say that the supply of water is on the whole poor.

Not one of the supplies is chlorinated and only one is filtered.

During the year 175 visits were made by the Sanitary Inspector to Council water supplies and 25 samples were taken from Council supplies and 22 from private supplies for bacteriological and chemical examination. The analyst's reports showed that 17 of the former samples and 7 of the latter as being unsatisfactory.

The preparation of the major scheme was carried on during the year but progress appears slow.

All the supplies, with the exception of two, are gravity supplies. In the case of the two other mechanical power is used.

Samples were also taken from the proposed intakes of the major water scheme at the Trinant, Monascin and Clydach brooks.

Water Works in respect of which improvements were carried out during the year.

Talybont - Extension of Main to Beniah.

Llanfihangel-Nant-Bran - Renewal of Water Main, and construction of new storage tank.

Water Supplies which are adequate.

23 known water supplies are maintained by Local Authority, of these 11 only are deemed to be adequate for the immediate needs of the inhabitants for domestic purposes only.

All the Council supplies with one exception provide a piped supply and it is considered that only 11 of these supplies are adequate for the present needs of the district. Several will not be adequate if and when sewerage schemes come to the villages. None of the private supplies are piped and none are adequate.

It will be seen from the above that adequate and wholesome supplies of water are very badly needed in the district and it is to be hoped that the preparation of the major scheme will be completed with the least possible delay.

Drainage and Sewerage. The villages of Sennbridge and Defynock are the only ones with a sewerage system and this could be considerably improved as the effluent, which flows into the river Usk, is far from satisfactory.

Preparatory work in connection with a sewerage scheme for the village of Talybont was continued during the year.

Modern methods of sewage disposal, at least for the larger villages, are badly needed in the district.

The Council have decided which of the villages are to be provided with proper methods of sewage disposal and also the order of priority of this work.

Closet Accommodation.

Number of houses with baths in the district.....	336
Number of houses with wash-hand basins.....	346
Number of houses with sinks.....	595
Number of houses with W.C.	435
Number of houses that have had proper W.C.'s provided during the year.....	16
Number of houses that have had baths provided during the year.....	9

Public Cleansing. Refuse collection and removal is carried out under the supervision of the Chief Sanitary Inspector. Refuse is removed once each week by contract from the villages of Senny, Sonnybridge, Defynock, Cray, Trecastle, Llywel, Bishopstown, Pentrebach, Pentrefelin, Nant-y-gwrciddyn, Ponpont and Llanspyddid.

The refuse from the villages of Sonnybridge, Defynock, Cray, Pentrebach, Pentrefelin, Nant-y-gwrciddyn, is disposed of at the Council Refuse Disposal Site at SENNYBRIDGE.

The refuse from the villages of Llywel, Bishopstown, and Trecastle is disposed of at the Refuse Site at TRECASTLE.

The villages of Cradoc, Aboryscir, Llanfihangel-Nant-Bran, Aberbran, Trallong, Pontfaen, Merthyr Cynog, Upper Chapel, Lower Chapel, Pwllgloyw, Llandofaelog and Garthbrengy.

The refuse from the villages of Cradoc etc. is disposed of at the Refuse Site at SENNYBRIDGE.

The villages of Tybwl, Libanus, Storey Arms, Cantref, Llanfrynach, Llanfigan, Pencelly, Aber, Cross Oak, Talybont, Llansaintffraed House, Bwlch (such houses as are situated in the Council's Administrative Area) Cathedine, Llanhamlach, Groesffordd, and Llechfaen.

The Refuse from the villages of Tybwl, Libanus, Storey Arms, Cantref, Llanfrynach, Llanfigan, Pencelly, Aber, Cross Oak, Talybont, Llansaintffraed House, Bwlch, Cathedine, Llanhamlach, Groesffordd, and Llechfaen is disposed of at the Refuse Site at TALYBONT.

The villages of Llanddew, Felinfach, Llandefalle, Llanfillo, Talylllyn, Llangorse, Pennorth.

The refuse from the villages of Llanddew, Felinfach, Llandefalle, Llanfillo, Llanfihangel-Talylllyn, Llangorse, Pennorth, is disposed of at the Refuse Site at LLANFIHANGEL-TALYLLYN.

A comprehensive scheme for the collection and removal of refuse and salvage in each village and hamlet is therefore now in operation.

The choice of sites for tipping continues to provide considerable difficulty.

Sanitary Inspection of the area. The sanitary inspection of the area was undertaken by the Chief Sanitary Inspector, Mr. W. J. Rees assisted by the additional sanitary inspectors Mr. Hopkins and Mr. Miles, who were engaged mainly on the rural housing survey. I am indebted to the Chief Sanitary Inspector for the figures and details of his work contained in this report. This information has proved most useful in the preparation of this report.

The following summary gives information relating to the work of the sanitary inspectors during the year.

Nuisances.

Number of complaints received.....	119.
Number of complaints investigated.....	119.
Number of premises inspected.....	177.
Number of preliminary notices.....	100.
for a. Structural defects.....	88.
b. Sanitary defects.....	9.
c. Foul conditions.....	3.
Number of statutory notices served.....	0.

There has been great difficulty during the year in carrying out repairs owing to the limited supply of building material. At present repair work is largely of a patching nature and it is to be hoped that a greater supply of material will soon be available for the repair of domestic property to prevent decent property deteriorating.

Houses let in Lodgings. It is not considered that any of the houses in the district are of such a nature to require control under byelaws made under Section 6 of the Housing Act, 1936.

Offensive Trades. There are no offensive trades in the district.

Common Lodging Houses. There are no common lodging houses in the district.

Licensed Premises. Number of visits by Sanitary Inspector....32.
Number of notices served.....3.

Shops. Number of inspections made.....47.

Factories.

Number of factories on register.....	23.
Number of inspections made.....	23.
Number of defects found.....	4.
Number of defects remedied.....	4.
There is no outwork done in the district.	

Tents, Vans, and Sheds. Number of visits made.....44.
Number of notices served.....4.

Eradication of Bed Bugs and steps taken to combat infestation.

Any premises found as a result of inspection or complaint to be infested with bed bugs or other vermin is treated with D.D.T. preparations which have been found to be very successful.

Number of premises inspected.....	1.
Number of premises disinfected.....	1.

Rodent Control. Mr. J.C. Reynolds is still employed as the Rodent Officer to carry out the work of rodent destruction under the supervision of the Chief Sanitary Inspector. Details of the work carried out are given below;

Number of premises inspected.....	373.
Number of premises found infested.....	88.
Number of notices served.....	1.
Number of premises treated by Rodent Operator.....	80.
Number of premises treated by occupier.....	8.
Estimated number of rats killed during the year.....	2657.

Sewer Treatments during the year.

Sennybridge - Two Maintenance treatments were carried out in May and September.
 Treacastle - One treatment was carried out during July - August.

Legal Proceedings. No legal proceedings were undertaken by the Council during the year.

SECTION 5. HOUSING.

There was no appreciable difference in the housing conditions in the district during the year. Owing to the complete cessation of building operations during the war years the housing situation was acute. It is to be hoped that labour conditions and the supply of materials will show some improvement during the coming year so that this pressing need may be alleviated.

The Council have now under course of construction 50 houses, as follows;

Treacastle	12
Sennybridge	12
Defynock	4
Talybont	16
Llangorse	6

None of these houses were completed at end of year but one house was completed by private enterprise.

Number of house to house inspections made.....287.
 Number of notices served.....62.

SECTION 6. INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Milk. The actual number of milk producers in the area is not accurately known. The need for registration is being made known by announcements in the press and other means and the register is being brought up to date.

Milk (Special Designation) Orders.1. Tuberculin Tested Milk.

Number of producer wholesalers.....19)
 Number of producer retailers.....)

2. Accredited Milk.

Number of producer retailers.....12)
 Number of producer wholesalers.....)

3. Pasteurised Milk. There are no wholesale or retail producers in the area.Record of Inspections and Milk Testing.

Number of inspections to cowsheds and dairies.....219.
 Number of notices served.....4.
 Plus numerous verbal.

National Milk Testing and Advisory Scheme.

Under this scheme an attempt is made by the sanitary inspector to sample each retailers milk every two weeks. Wholesale milk is tested at the various creameries. The laboratory functioning under this scheme is situated in Brecon.
 Under this scheme the milk is graded into the following categories;

Brecon Rural District.

Category A.....Good keeping quality milk.
 Category B.....Doubtful quality milk.
 Category C.....Poor keeping quality milk.

The results of the samples taken during the year were as follows;

	Cat.A.	Cat.B.	Cat.C.	Total.
Totals	351.	45.	74.	470.

Sampling for the presence of tuberculosis.

Nineteen samples of milk were examined during the year for the presence of tuberculosis. Of these, one only proved positive. As this sample was taken from a school supply, this sampling was amply justified. Between the taking of the samples and the visit of the veterinary inspector the cow giving the tuberculous milk had been disposed of and no evidence of tuberculosis was found in the remaining cows in the herd.

Meat. There is no slaughterhouse in the district. All meat is distributed from the Ministry of Food Slaughtering point in Brecon.

Other Foods.Food Preparation Rooms (including Bakehouses).

Number of bakehouses.....1
 Number of inspections made.....27

Ice Cream Premises.

Number of producer retailers on register.....3.
 Number of inspections made.....35.

Preserved Food Premises.

Number of premises registered for the manufacture of sausages and preserved foods.....1.
 Number of inspections made.....7.

Fish and Fried Fish Shops.

Number of fish shops.....1.
 Number of inspections made.....38.

SECTION 7. PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

The following number of notifiable infectious disease cases were reported to me during the year.

Scarlet Fever.....2
 Measles.....62
 Acute Anterior Poliomyelitis.....2

The district experienced quite a severe outbreak of measles during the month of May and June. The parts mostly affected were Sennybridge and Devynock. The two cases of acute anterior poliomyelitis were removed to Merthyr Isolation Hospital where both made a good recovery. No death was caused by a notifiable infectious disease during the year.

The number of cases investigated by the sanitary inspector.....11.
 Number of fumigations.....11.

Venereal Disease. The County Council has an agreement with the General and Eye Hospital, Swansea, for the treatment of these cases.

The tracing of contacts and the following up of defaulters is the responsibility of the County Council.

Tuberculosis. The following details show the position as regards tuberculosis in recent years.

Number of cases on the register at commencement of year.....	27.
Number of fresh cases notified during the year.....	5.
Number of cases removed from register	
a. Deaths.....	4.
b. Recovered.....	2.
Number of cases remaining on register at end of year.....	26.

The number of cases notified in recent years is shown below;

1939.	1940.	1941.	1942.	1943.	1944.	1945.	1946.	1947.
2.	12.	9.	6.	9.	7.	4.	9.	5.

The County Council is responsible for the allowance scheme.

Diphtheria Immunisation. During the year the monthly clinics held for the purpose of immunising children against diphtheria were continued. The place and date of these clinics were advertised in the local press and also parents were advised in the press that children should have a third injection when they reach school age. Continual efforts are being made by the County Council Health Visitors to get as many children as possible immunised. The response is on the whole satisfactory but the number of children attending for the third injection, as mentioned above, should be considerably higher.

Number of children who had completed a full course of immunisation at any time up to 31st. December, 1947.

Age at 31.12.47.	Under 1.	1.	2.	3.	4.	5-9.	10-15.
------------------	----------	----	----	----	----	------	--------

Number immunised.	0.	34.	43.	72.	63.	175.	32.
-------------------	----	-----	-----	-----	-----	------	-----

Number immunised during the year. Under 5. 5-15. Third Inj.

	45.	2.	2.
--	-----	----	----

It must be pointed out that individual record cards for children have only been kept since July 1st. 1943, and therefore the above figures only show those children actually immunised by me since that date. I have no individual records of children immunised before that date.

The following figures show the extent of immunising in the under five year group at the end of the year.

Number of children born in 1942.....	125.
Number of these children immunised since July 1st, 1943.....	79.
Number of children born in 1943.....	109.
Number of these children since immunised by me.....	63.
Number of children born in 1944.....	142.
Number of these children since immunised by me.....	72.
Number of children born in 1945.....	105.
Number of these children since immunised by me.....	43.
Number of children born in 1946.....	127.
Number of these children since immunised by me.....	34.
Number of children born in 1947.....	126.
Number of these children since immunised by me.....	0.

When the scattered nature of the district is considered the above figures may be considered as fairly satisfactory.

There were no cases of diphtheria in the district during the year.

In the preparation of this report I have endeavoured to deal briefly with all matters within my responsibility regarding public health and preventive medicine and I have included all the subjects specifically requested by the Welsh Board of Health.

Yours faithfully,

T.C.R.George,

Medical Officer of Health.

